

Deputy Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, University staff and distinguished guests; I feel honoured to thank all of you on behalf of the graduates receiving their awards today.

First of all, I want to emphasize the achievements of my fellow graduates, especially those who have studied in various locations around Australia, and also a few graduates who completed their qualifications in many overseas countries, including Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong. Undoubtedly, wherever we studied, all of us have struggled to balance work, family and friends with our studies. Today we celebrate the end of all that hard work; we celebrate all the nights we stayed up late to finish assignments in time; we celebrate cramming before exams; we celebrate the anxiety we all had before opening our semester results; and we celebrate all the coffee we had to stay awake in class!

I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of all the graduates here today, to thank our partners, families and friends for all their help and support throughout our years of study.

Now, my fellow graduates: I want to tell you a short story that will hopefully help you in your future undertakings. The company I worked for just recently went into administration. And although the final report of the administrator's investigations is yet to be published, I can safely say that there is one root cause of failure: lack of planning. Yes, we had to plan our assignments. And yes, we had to structure our responses to essay questions in exams. My dear graduates; consciously keep this habit. No matter what you do and where you go next in life, remember to plan. Plan your next career move, even plan your personal lives, and always have contingency plans in case plan A goes south! I know for a fact that my employers failed to plan; they took on too much on their proverbial plate without having concrete budgets or forecasts. The result? Huge losses and headaches for everyone involved with the business.

I will leave you to enjoy the rest of this special day with some very wise words from Richard Winwood, "Life offers two gifts – time and the ability to choose how we spend it. Planning is a process of choosing among those many options. If we do not choose to plan, then we choose to have others plan for us."

Thank you very much for your attention, and congratulations, again, to all the graduates and their loved ones!